

Minutes
Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Teleconference Meeting
March 27, 2020 10:00 AM

The regular meeting of the Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources was held by teleconference at 10:00 am, March 27, 2020. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was posted and mailed to the news media. Chairman Norman Pulliam presided at the meeting. Board members present included Mark Hartley, Keith Hinson, Mike Hutchins, Carlisle Oxner, Jake Rasor, Jr. and Duane Swygert. Director Boyles and staff members of the Department of Natural Resources were present at the meeting.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Norman Pulliam called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

II. Chairman's Comments

Chairman Pulliam thanked everyone for their thoughts, calls and cards with the passing of his granddaughter.

Chairman Pulliam called for a moment of silence and asked that everyone be thoughtful of the current situation of the country during the COVID-19 pandemic.

III. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Pulliam asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the February 20, 2020 meeting minutes. *Mr. Oxner made a motion that the Board approve the minutes of the February 20, 2020 meeting as presented. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

IV. Director's Briefings

Director Boyles informed the Board that the agency is doing everything possible to comply with the Governor's Executive Orders regarding the pandemic. Approximately 2/3 of agency staff are telecommuting, Law Enforcement is working with other law enforcement agencies, properties are still open and activities have been postponed or cancelled.

V. Deputy Directors' Reports

A. Support Services

Angie Cassella, Deputy Director for Support Services, thanked everyone for their thoughts, calls, texts and cards with the passing of her sister. Mrs. Cassella then reported that the licensing, titling and registration office is open and processing. They are averaging 700 calls per day and 600 pieces of mail per week. They have issued 1,700 sets of turkey tags, 618 resident freshwater fishing licenses, 313 resident saltwater fishing licenses and 300 resident combination licenses.

B. Land, Water and Conservation

Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director for Land, Water and Conservation, reported that the majority of division staff are telecommuting. Staff are able to read reports, write reports, participate in conference calls, online training and webinars. Mr. Rentiers noted that the Conservation Districts Program donated 250 Hazmat suits to Law Enforcement. Mr. Rentiers stated that he received word from the Water Utilities

Council that they will be suspending disconnects. Mr. Rentiers reported that heritage preserve properties remain open.

C. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries

Emily Cope, Deputy Director for Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, reported that many division staff are able to telecommuting. Staff are able to perform maintenance on equipment, continue working at the fisheries, participate in online training, catching up on administrative tasks such as reports and entering data. Mrs. Cope did point out that depending on how long the pandemic lasts there may be significant impacts on dove fields, waterfowl impoundments and fish stocking.

D. Law Enforcement

COL Chisolm Frampton, Deputy Director for Law Enforcement, stated that 19 division staff are telecommuting. COL Frampton reported that all officers have N95 masks, sanitizer wipes, gloves and hand sanitizer in their trucks. EMD is open and law enforcement is on both Governor and county daily calls. COL Frampton reported that we are working with Chief Keel to get priority testing for first responders. COL Frampton stated that this weekend there will be eight boat patrols on the coast, the aviation units will be used, Region 3 will be working with Lexington County on Lake Murray and officers are assisting Edisto with their beach patrol.

E. Marine

Phil Maier, Deputy Director for Marine Resources, reported that 95% of division staff are either telecommuting or on leave. Mr. Maier stated that staff with essential functions are working alternating shifts and in isolation.

VI. Item(s) for Board Action

H. Leave Policy Update

Eva Smith, Director of Human Resources, reported that the Office of Human Resources allows for the Human Resources Director to advance up to 15 days of additional sick leave in extenuating circumstances. Ms. Smith informed the Board that the Department is requesting to update the leave policy from its current 5 days of additional sick leave to reflect the 15 days of additional sick leave, as allowed by the Office of Human Resources, due to the ongoing pandemic. *Mr. Oxner made a motion that the Board approve the Leave Policy Update as recommended by staff. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

VII. Executive Session

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the SC DNR Board go into executive session pursuant to SC Code Section 30-4-70(A)(1) and (A)(2) to discuss contractual matters related to Item for Board Action (A, B, C, D and G) and to discuss appointments to advisory boards and conservation district commissioner appointments and reappointments related to Items for Board Action (E and F). Dr. Hartley seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Open Session

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the Board return to open session, noting that no action was taken during executive session. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

IX. Item(s) for Board Action

A. Potential Property Acquisition in Laurens County

Mr. Rasor made a motion that the Department not pursue the acquisition of a 1,023-acre property in Laurens County known as Lake Rabon. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Property Acquisition in Colleton County

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the SC DNR Board, subject to standard due diligence, grant final approval of the acquisition of approximately 8 acres on South Fenwick Island in Colleton County. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Property Acquisition in Pickens County

Mr. Rasor made a motion that the SC DNR Board accept the recommendation as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, subject to standard due diligence, and grant final approval of the acquisition of approximately 12 acres adjoining Wadakoe Mountain Heritage Preserve in Pickens County to be dedicated as a heritage preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

D. Potential Property Acquisition in Greenville County

Mr. Oxner made a motion that the SC DNR Board accept the recommendation as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board and grant preliminary approval to evaluate a potential property acquisition of approximately 17 acres east of Bunched Arrowhead Heritage Preserve in Greenville County that would be dedicated as a heritage preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust, and the expenditure of up to \$20,000 in Heritage Trust funds to conduct due diligence activities. Mr. Hinson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

E. Land, Water and Conservation Advisory Committee Appointment

Dr. Hartley made a motion that SC DNR Board approve the appointment of Mr. William Glenn, Greenville County, to a three-year term beginning on March 27, 2020, as recommended by the Land, Water and Conservation Advisory Committee. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

F. Conservation District Commissioner Appointments/Reappointments

Dr. Hartley made a motion that the SC DNR Board approve the reappointment of Mr. Kenneth Mullis, Richland County, as a conservation district commissioner with term being 3-27-20 to 3-27-24, as recommended by the Land, Water and Conservation Advisory Committee. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Hartley made a motion that the SC DNR Board approve the new appointment of Mr. John Rice, Allendale County – term being 3-27-20 to 3-24-24; Mr. Joseph Oswald, IV, Allendale County – term being 3-27-20 to 1-31-23; Mr. C. Benjamin Setzler III, Newberry County – term being 3-27-20 to 3-3-21; Mr. Jefferson Laney, Richland County – term being 3-27-20 to 3-27-24; and Ms. Mary S. Burts, Richland County – term being 3-27-20 to 1-31-21, as recommended by the Land, Water and

Conservation Advisory Committee. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

G. Potential Property Acquisition in Lexington County

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the SC DNR Board accept the recommendation as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board to grant preliminary approval to investigate a potential property acquisition of approximately 680 acres adjoining Congaree Creek Heritage Preserve in Lexington County to be dedicated as a heritage preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust. Additionally, this action authorizes the expenditure of up to \$200,000 of Heritage Trust funds to conduct due diligence activities. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Pulliam asked for a report back on the expenditure of due diligence.

X. Time and Location of Next Board Meeting

The time and location of the next meeting is to be determined.

XI. Adjournment

Dr. Hartley made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.